

ENVISION EAST LONGMEADOW RESILIENT MASTER PLAN

EAST LONGMEADOW MASTER PLAN COMMITTEE

MEETING #5
MARCH 24, 2021

4:00 PM, VIRTUAL MEETING





ENVISION
EAST LONGMEADOW
RESILIENT MASTER PLAN

**COMMUNITY SURVEY,
FOCUS GROUP TAKEAWAYS
VISIONING,
ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES**

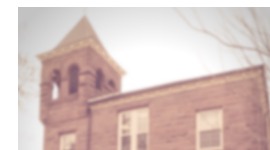
PRESENTATION AGENDA

1. Community Survey Results
2. Focus Group Takeaways
3. Vision Statement
4. Issues and Opportunities



COMMUNITY SURVEY DATA + FINDINGS

- Survey Period: August 14 – October 14, 2020
- 302 Respondents
- Questions to identify respondents
 - Age
 - Resident or non-resident
 - Occupation



3. How important are the following general development goals for East Longmeadow's future?

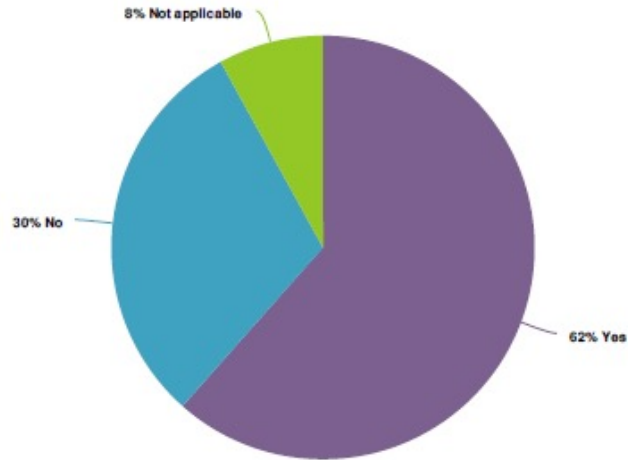
	Not Important	Somewhat Important	Very Important	Don't Know/No Opinion
Manage and guide commercial development Count Row %	13 4.8%	80 29.3%	170 62.3%	10 3.7%
Preserve air and water quality Count Row %	4 1.5%	36 13.1%	233 85.0%	1 0.4%
Increase recreation opportunities, playing fields, trails Count Row %	26 9.6%	92 33.8%	150 55.1%	4 1.5%
Preserve open space (farmland, forests) Count Row %	12 4.4%	81 30.0%	175 64.8%	2 0.7%
Protect the natural environment (forests, fish, wildlife) Count Row %	10 3.7%	67 24.6%	195 71.7%	0 0.0%
Encourage more economic development Count Row %	55 20.2%	115 42.3%	98 36.0%	4 1.5%
Improve internet access and speeds Count Row %	17 6.2%	63 23.1%	189 69.2%	4 1.5%

Other goals:

- Retain small town vibe
 - No big box, no fast food options
 - Planning for reduced growth
- Better internet options
- Improve school buildings, especially high school
- Develop vacant/blighted properties
- Mixed Use Development
 - Economic development in center of town
 - Possibilities with new rezoning
- Roadway maintenance
- Expanding sidewalks
- Housing access
- Increase service/volunteer opportunities to build civic pride

HOUSING

Hypothetically, could you afford to buy the home in which you currently live at its market value?



What types of residential growth would you prefer for East Longmeadow in the future?

	Do not prefer	Neutral	Prefer	Don't Know/No Opinion
Single family homes with larger yards (3/4+ acre) Count Row %	40 14.9%	90 33.5%	133 49.4%	6 2.2%
Single family homes in compact neighborhoods with smaller yards (approx. 1/4 acre), adjacent open space Count Row %	118 44.5%	84 31.7%	55 20.8%	8 3.0%
Duplexes and three-family homes Count Row %	208 77.3%	35 13.0%	18 6.7%	8 3.0%
Mixed-use buildings with shops, offices and residences under one roof Count Row %	90 33.3%	96 35.6%	72 26.7%	12 4.4%
Apartments and condominiums Count Row %	148 55.4%	71 26.6%	40 15.0%	8 3.0%
Senior housing and assisted living facilities Count Row %	76 28.5%	113 42.3%	74 27.7%	4 1.5%
Homes that are accessible for people with disabilities Count Row %	28 10.5%	113 42.5%	120 45.1%	5 1.9%

Other comments:

- Be mindful of impacts to town services with increased residential growth
- In-law and shared family spaces within main house
- Blighted properties for redevelopment
- There's enough housing in East Longmeadow

6. What types of commercial growth would you prefer for East Longmeadow in the future?

	Do not prefer	Neutral	Prefer	Don't Know/No Opinion
More farms and agricultural businesses				
Count	19	116	128	8
Row %	7.0%	42.8%	47.2%	3.0%
More small, locally owned stores				
Count	8	43	214	4
Row %	3.0%	16.0%	79.6%	1.5%
More industrial businesses (trucking, manufacturing)				
Count	154	79	32	7
Row %	56.6%	29.0%	11.8%	2.6%
More offices (for businesses, medical services)				
Count	99	101	64	6
Row %	36.7%	37.4%	23.7%	2.2%
More restaurants and food stores				
Count	49	79	138	6
Row %	18.0%	29.0%	50.7%	2.2%
More hotels and tourist-oriented businesses				
Count	196	57	13	6
Row %	72.1%	21.0%	4.8%	2.2%
More large national chain stores				
Count	180	58	29	3
Row %	66.7%	21.5%	10.7%	1.1%

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

Other types of commercial growth:

- Allow for drive-thrus
- Manage current, empty businesses
- Recreational activities, dance classes, etc.
- Locally owned and directed development
- Town center

TOWN ISSUES & PRIORITIES

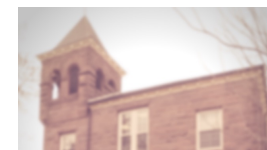
	Needs Immediate attention	Needs attention in 1-2 years	Needs attention in the long-term	Does not need attention	No opinion/don't know		Needs Immediate attention	Needs attention in 1-2 years	Needs attention in the long-term	Does not need attention	No opinion/don't know		Needs Immediate attention	Needs attention in 1-2 years	Needs attention in the long-term	Does not need attention	No opinion/don't know	
Maintenance and repair of Town buildings Count Row %	46 17.6%	47 17.9%	94 35.9%	20 7.6%	55 21.0%	Produce more electricity from solar, wind or hydro Count Row %	113 42.6%	46 17.4%	63 23.8%	33 12.5%	10 3.8%	Sewer treatment capacity and operation Count Row %	52 19.7%	63 23.9%	60 22.7%	23 8.7%	66 25.0%	
Quality of public schools Count Row %	142 53.4%	34 12.8%	53 19.9%	21 7.9%	16 6.0%	Reduce trash and solid waste Count Row %	85 32.3%	60 22.8%	58 22.1%	48 18.3%	12 4.6%							
Safety of children getting to and from schools Count Row %	104 39.8%	36 13.8%	54 20.7%	26 10.0%	41 15.7%	Making it easier to live and get to work without a car Count Row %	53 20.0%	38 14.3%	61 23.0%	83 31.3%	30 11.3%							
Selection and price of homes so life-long residents and working people can afford to stay Count Row %	87 33.1%	55 20.9%	52 19.8%	45 17.1%	24 9.1%	More energy efficiency in Town Buildings and vehicles Count Row %	59 22.3%	63 23.8%	69 26.0%	40 15.1%	34 12.8%							
Health concerns, such as obesity, asthma, diabetes, cancer Count Row %	67 25.4%	47 17.8%	61 23.1%	49 18.6%	40 15.2%	Protection of wetlands, streams Count Row %	98 37.0%	48 18.1%	75 28.3%	24 9.1%	20 7.5%							
Proper nutrition, hunger, food insecurity Count Row %	86 32.6%	39 14.8%	58 22.0%	45 17.0%	36 13.6%	Quality of Police, Fire, EMS Count Row %	67 25.4%	41 15.5%	58 22.0%	77 29.2%	21 8.0%							
Helping homeowners use less energy Count Row %	107 40.7%	55 20.9%	64 24.3%	24 9.1%	13 4.9%	Traffic safety, cut-throughs, speeding Count Row %	139 52.9%	42 16.0%	29 11.0%	37 14.1%	16 6.1%							
						Safety of pedestrians and bicyclists Count Row %	142 54.0%	41 15.6%	32 12.2%	32 12.2%	16 6.1%							

Other priorities:

- Accessibilities to facilities and services for mental and physical disabilities
- Mixed use recreation on the farm property
- Maintenance of stormwater
- Maintain and expand trails
- Sidewalks
- Town buildings should have solar
- Water quality
- Friendly for all generations

FOCUS GROUP TAKEAWAYS

- Full Focus Group Summary will be available on website.
- Open Space and Natural Resources
 - Recreation spaces doing well (pandemic-related)
 - 6.3 percent of open spaces are threatened
 - Publicize and communicate the open space and recreation opportunities
 - CPA funds have been utilized to increase recreation opportunity at Pine Knoll
 - Get non-profits and committees to support work and fundraising
 - Intergenerational activities for residents
- Historic and Cultural Resources
 - Center of town is unique
 - Three historic buildings have been renovated over the years, still accessibility issues
 - Historic significance of the Depot and surrounding that could provide future programming for itself and surrounding historic buildings
 - Center Field is an underutilized amenity
 - Farms are historical and need to be preserved and prioritized
 - Bridge gap between history and economic development



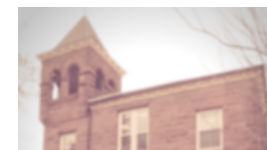
FOCUS GROUP TAKEAWAYS

■ Transportation

- Low-lying areas in town which can be impacted by ongoing and more severe weather events
- Locations with safety problems
 - Rotary, Prospect and Chestnut intersection, Mapleshade and Porter intersection
- Sidewalks!
- Town applied for Complete Streets program
- Biking demand up 400 percent
- Rail Trail upgrades

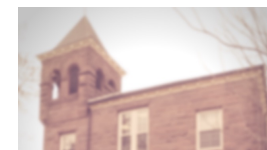
■ Public Services and Facilities

- Town recently hired a grant writer to manage town grant programs
- Library services have been successful during the pandemic, needs uncovered like teen/tween programming
- Many accomplishments in DPW facilities and services, school department, Health and Fire Dept
- Regulatory needs are challenging – Stormwater MS4 permit
- More coordination among town departments needed
- Town facilities need improvements
 - Police and fire stations, Town Hall

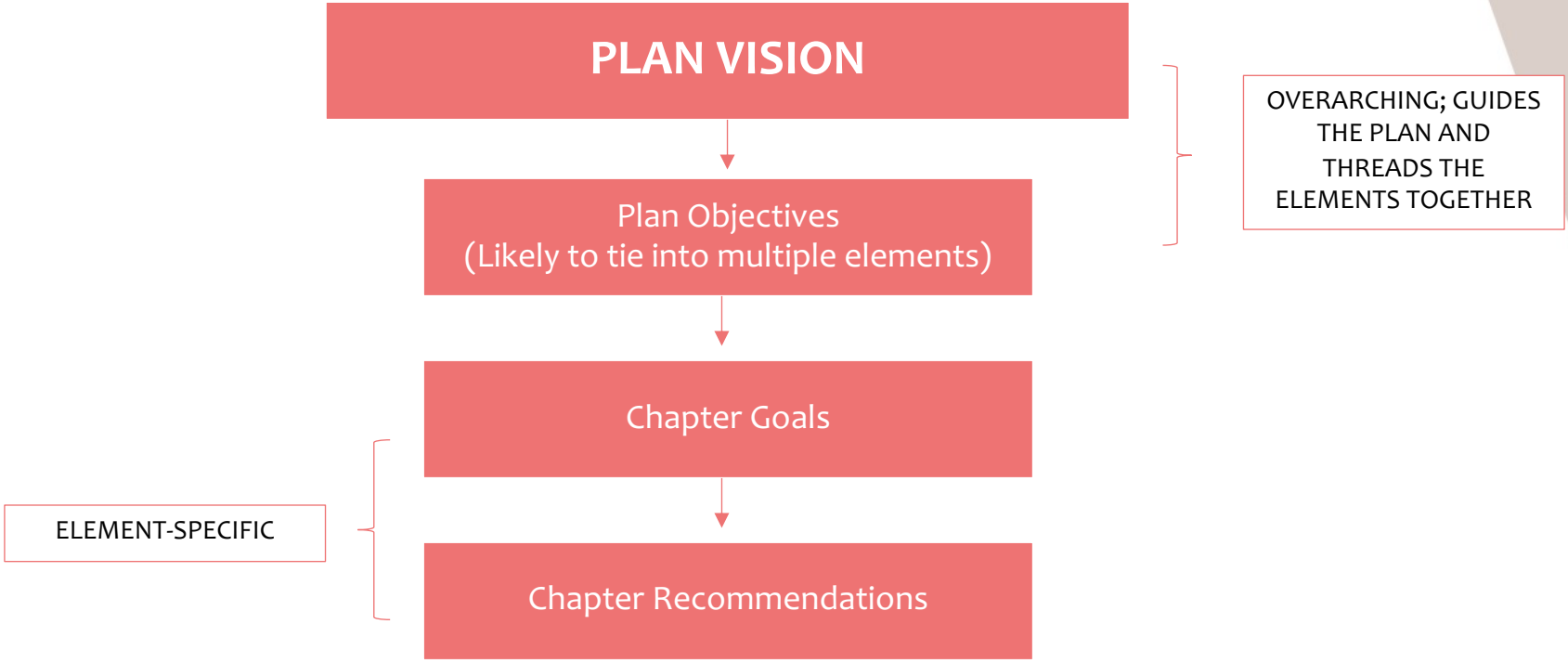


FOCUS GROUP TAKEAWAYS

- Housing
 - Variety and balance of housing types
 - Housing market is hot!
 - Passage of Mixed-Use Village District will open new opportunities – just need a developer!
 - Housing for singles/younger families
 - Training and education opportunities to keep people in East Longmeadow
 - People are leaving because housing costs and taxes are going up
- Economic Development
 - Seamless municipal permitting processes to open businesses
 - Center Square is going to be a nice draw
 - Putting out the welcome mat for businesses and keeping that communication open
 - Permit fees and documentation can be a roadblock
 - Walkable downtown, foot traffic for amenities and other businesses
 - Take a look at home businesses and permitting those uses
 - Privatize internet? There seems to be infrastructure.
 - Proud of industrial parks and zoning standards in the Industrial Zoning District



VISION STATEMENT



Plan Vision

We *envision* a vibrant future for East Longmeadow — one in which we value and include all members of our community, plan for managed and sustainable growth, and cultivate the Town’s identity as a charming, welcoming, and safe place to call home. We are poised to flourish as a presence within the region, and the *East Longmeadow Resilient Master Plan* provides a lasting framework that will enable us to fulfill this vision.

Plan Objective

By balancing development opportunities with sensible fiscal management and natural resource conservation, we will:

- Establish a strong local economic base;
- Welcome cultural, agricultural, commercial, and recreational options that enrich our community’s sense of place;
- Explore diverse opportunities for the Town’s developable land;
- Align zoning policies to community needs and wants;
- Invest in the redevelopment of our Town Center and industrial zones;
- Diversify our housing stock to meet the needs of present and future residents;
- Promote our agricultural heritage and history as a quarry town;
- Continue to support passive and active recreation opportunities and the departments that oversee them;
- Provide programming, accessible facilities, and resources that meet the needs of families, seniors, disabled residents, and youth;
- Improve accessibility for disabled individuals and families;
- Sustain a high level of professional staffing and municipal operations in the long-term, including our qualified public safety staff;
- Maintain the excellence of our educational system by supporting our schools’ needs;
- Promote local volunteerism and community involvement with Town initiatives;
- Plan for energy efficiency, green initiatives, and resiliency to climate change;
- Improve mobility through street improvements, traffic safety measures, and expansion of accessible pedestrian and cyclist infrastructure;
- Support the Town’s existing agriculture to ensure the availability of fresh, local food; and
- Maintain East Longmeadow as a safe and inclusive community for all.



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

LAND USE

- Encouraging (re)development in the town center
- Protection of small-town feel and vibe
 - Home occupations and site plan review
 - Protection of existing farmlands and agricultural uses
 - Planned Unit Residential Zoning vs. Open Space Residential Development
 - Reviewing future development against this Master Plan



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

TRANSPORTATION

- Complete Streets
 - Pedestrian safety and sidewalks
 - Bicycle infrastructure
- Continued monitoring of roadways and culverts to remain in a state of good repair.
- Expanding rail trail
- Safety for identified traffic intersections
- Congestion



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

HOUSING

- Population and growth
 - Housing for seniors, young people
- Housing affordability
- Housing choice types
- Resilience in home construction



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

- Town Center
- Commercial corridors
- Small businesses and entrepreneurship
- Preserving agricultural uses
- Vacant industrial properties
- Home-based businesses



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

OPEN SPACE and NATURAL RESOURCES

- Water quality
- Connect wildlife and trail corridors
- Maintain and preserve existing athletic fields
- Increase public awareness of recreation facilities
- Volunteers to support open space and recreation facilities.



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

HISTORIC and CULTURAL RESOURCES

- Outdated historic inventory and undocumented resources
- Many resources lost over time due to demolition and alterations
- Lack of community awareness about significance of remaining resources
- No Community Preservation Plan for the CPA program
- Potential accessibility issues with existing resources
- Historic and Cultural Programming that is often unilateral
- Lack of current emergency plans to support built cultural resources and collections for long-term resiliency



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

PUBLIC SERVICES and FACILITIES

- Public services
- Fiber optic infrastructure discovered
- Building maintenance and accessibility
- School Department
- Capital planning
- Town department communication
- Volunteerism



ISSUES + OPPORTUNITIES

SUSTAINABILITY, CLEAN ENERGY, and CLIMATE CHANGE

- Top priorities include culver repair, stormwater, sidewalks/pavement repair.
- Energy retrofitted school buildings
- Had *Green Communities* designation that was then lost
- Strategically removed trees falling during wind events
- Majority of town prone to flooding
- Town Hall facility is very old and complex
- Full energy assessment of all buildings needed in town





ENVISION

EAST LONGMEADOW

RESILIENT MASTER PLAN

QUESTIONS & DISCUSSION

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